

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 9, 11-13, 21 and 25-30 are pending in this application. By this amendment, Claim 9 is amended; and no claims are added or cancelled herewith. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 9, 11-13, 21 and 25-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over JP 2001-182872 to Yukinobu in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,761,188 to Besche and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,973,440 to Tamura.

It is respectfully submitted that the applied art does not teach, suggest or render obvious the claimed features of a fiber braid reinforcement covering the bellows, and a buffer material covering an outer face of the bellows from a bottom of the troughs to a height that is 0.5 to 2.0 times a height of the ridges, wherein gaps in the fiber braid reinforcement are impregnated with a curable resin or rubber composition, as recited in Claim 9. One or more exemplary embodiments of the present invention relate to a vibration-absorbing tube having a fiber braid reinforcement that provides superior vibration absorbency, whip resistance and pressure resistance.

The applied art of Yukinobu merely discusses a metallic pipe 1, elastic layer 2, reinforcing layer 3 and an outer surface layer 4. An unvulcanized rubber layer is twisted around the outer layer of the reinforcement layer 3.

Besche discusses as shown in Fig. 1, a metallic inner layer 1, an elastomer compensation zone 2, a reinforcing layer 3 built as a mesh, and an elastomer outer layer 4.

The Office Action acknowledges on page 4 that both Yukinobu and Besche do not teach or suggest the claimed features with respect to gaps in the fiber braid reinforcement being impregnated with a curable resin or rubber composition. The Office Action asserts that

Tamura teaches these claimed features and it would have been obvious to modify Yukinobu and Besche with Tamura. Applicants disagree.

In particular, Tamura relates to a fiber-reinforced thermosetting resin molding for hot pressing injecting. In Fig. 1, a liquid resin 2 is extruded through supply terminals 1a and 1b of resin supply units 13a and 13b onto spreading rollers 3a and 3b. The resin composition 2 is projected in the form of particles onto filmy objects 4a and 4b being conveyed by a conveying unit 14. Glass fibers are supplied from a fiber supply unit 16 and are allowed to mix with the resin composition. The resultant mixture is deposited on the plastic films 4a and 4b and advanced to a conveyor unit 14 comprising rollers 7 and 7 and a belt 8, and further transferred to an impregnating and deaerating unit 15 comprising impregnating and deaerating rollers 9 and belts 10.

The features of the claimed invention are not taught by the applied art. Again, Claim 9 recites in part that a fiber braid reinforcement covers the bellows, and a buffer material covering an outer face of the bellows from a bottom of the troughs to a height that is 0.5 to 2.0 times a height of the ridges, and gaps in the fiber braid reinforcement are impregnated with a curable resin or rubber composition. The resin molding for hot press injecting in Tamura is only required for the strength resin mold itself, as shown in Table I in the specification of Tamura. There is no teaching or suggestion in the applied art to modify the structure of Yukinobu with the teachings in Tamura. Applicants assert that the Office Action fails to establish how or why one skilled in the art would selectively pick and choose from the features of the cited references to arrive at the combined features of the present claims. For example, the structure of Yukinobu already provides for an additional unvulcanized rubber layer twisted around the outer layer of the reinforcement. One of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to further modify Yukinobu to include a fiber braid

reinforcement with gaps in the fiber braid reinforcement impregnated with a curable resin or rubber composition, as claimed.

Moreover, the cited references do not recognize the advantageous results achieved by the present invention as discussed further below, thus further demonstrating the non-obviousness of the present claims. In accordance with the present invention, Applicants have recognized a combination of features which provides for the gaps in the fiber braid reinforcement to be impregnated with a curable resin or rubber composition and therefore, the resin can protect the fiber braid reinforcement from fiber displacement even when the vibration-absorbing tube is used in a curved state and the bellows can maintain high durability for long period of time. See for example page 14 of the present specification.

Additionally, a further advantageous feature of one or more examples of the invention can be shown from Table I in the present specification. For example with respect to comparison sample 5 and sample 3 in the pressure resistance test (0 to 21 Mpa), sample 5 of the vibration-absorbing tube including a fiber braid reinforcement impregnated with rubber was more than 100,000 times highly improved in pressure resistance compared to sample 3 including a fiber braid reinforcement not impregnated that was only 30,000 times in pressure resistance between the same.

The applied art does not render obvious the features of the claimed invention and therefore, cannot provide at least the advantages discussed above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections based on Yukinobu in view of Besche and Tamura is respectfully requested.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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